



Oral Statement
Social Forum 2019
Promotion and protection of the rights of children
and youth through education
General Statement

On the occasion of this Social Forum, we at Make Mothers Matter wish to remind Member States that ***Promoting and protecting the rights of children and youth through education also requires supporting families and parents as the primary educators of their children.***

The *Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of SDG 4*¹ explicitly calls for the support of families as the primary caregivers of children – particularly during early childhood.

Family structures have been greatly affected as our societies have undergone rapid changes. The models of extended and nuclear families have gradually given way to more diverse forms of families. Single-parent families especially, which are mostly single mother families, can not only result from parental separation or divorce, but also from migration or emergency situations such as conflict or natural disaster.

Social issues like unemployment, income inequality, imbalances between work and family life and lifestyle changes related to urbanization also carry health consequences with new risks of illness, increase in drug addiction and psychological difficulties related to daily stress. In addition, technology has impacted human relationships and behaviours, especially within families.

As traditional structures disappear, new parenting difficulties are emerging. Concerted efforts are therefore needed to help parents play their role.

A recent UNESCO report on early childhood education and care, indicates that more than half of young children risk being deprived of quality parental support in areas deemed as essential².

There is an urgent need to analyse and examine the reasons why some parents do not invest in or are unable to fulfil their parental educational responsibilities. Social and family policies play a determining role in parenting practices and the functioning of families. But more needs to be done by providing parents with access to education and support programs.

In conclusion, MMM would like to stress that parental education and support not only benefit families and children, contributing in particular to the realization their rights. But supporting families also benefits communities and the entire country – it is essential to face our global challenges and realize the SDGs.

¹ Paragraph 37 - http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en_2.pdf

² 2015 UNESCO Report: Investing against Evidence: the Global State of Early Childhood Care and Education